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HENRY WARD BEECHER.



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THE INDWELLING OF CHRIST.

"Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."—Matt. xxviii. 18-20.

"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."—John xiv. 16, 17.

The first passage that I read is the commission that was given to the disciples. While it covers the general ground of exterior work—of going forth and preaching to all lands—it contains the declaration that the source of their hope and their courage and their comfort was the fact that Christ was himself with them. Departing, he was to be a living power, and that, too, in a sphere where higher forces of life can be administered as they cannot be upon earth. There is a latent assumption or expressed declaration running through the teaching of Christ, and more particularly as it is manifested by John, that the forces, the instruments, of the physical and moral life were inadequate for the expression of the highest life and the noblest things; and the constant interchange of language on the part of our Saviour, rising out of obvious truths into seeming mysticism, and going again from these mystic and obscure utterances back to common life—this play backward and forward—is just what we might have expected; for to the consciousness the higher spiritual life was not represented. To him there was a life where

truth and faculty worked together differently from what they do here, and for the representation of which but the most partial analogies could be found in this mortal life. If there be any one truth that runs through the New Testament, it is the truth of the absolute superiority of the life which goes on in the bosom of God and of spiritual beings, to which we aspire, and into which we are to come ; and when Jesus died, and was buried, and rose again, without any considerable manifestation of power—that is, such power as he manifested before—the disciples, about to lose him again, might be in great discouragement. Therefore he declared to them that it was expedient that he should go forth from them ; that it was impossible that he could be so much to them by mere juxtaposition as he could by spiritual unity ; that while he was in the flesh and they were in the flesh, however near they might be to each other, however endearing their relations might be, there was substantially a bar to that union which was possible in a higher mode of existence ; and that when he was gone from them it would not be extinguishment, it would not be forgetfulness : he still would live, and his power would be enhanced—he would have all power ; and his promise to them was, “Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.” The separation, then, was to result in a higher unity, ineffable, transcending all that is known upon earth.

Was this declaration of union official ? Did it belong simply to the band of the apostles, or did it belong to all Christians ? Is it that which they who are specially consecrated to the work of preaching and administration may hope for, or is it universal, and may it be appropriated by every soul that can rise up into the conditions of it ?

The apostles were designed to be witnesses, in the first place, of great truths which had passed under their eyes. Such was the fundamental ground of apostleship : for then there were no newspapers ; there were no printing presses ; there was no means of recording the knowledge which they had gained, and which was to be the foundation, afterwards, of writing the history or gospel. It was necessary in the beginning that the facts which had occurred in Galilee and

Judea should be witnessed to by competent men; and to them was given competent power of instruction, and of construction so far as it came within the work of preaching the Gospel. To be witnesses, to be instructors, and to be constructors—this was apostolic. Beyond this the apostles had no special prerogatives. They had nothing beyond this that lifted them above the ordinary Christian believer. Indeed, according to the moral measurements of the new dispensation, exaltation comes by excessive labor, by humiliation, by suffering, by going down out of conspicuity into obscurity, if need be; and if the apostles were prominent above other believers, it was by prisons, by stripes, by persecutions, by trials; and genuine apostolicity has not been so much coveted as the honors of apostolicity.

Any man, then, has a right to appropriate by self-instruction or otherwise the fundamental elements of life—courage, hope, character. Every one has a right to that which Christ promised to the apostles.

That this view need not stand merely upon general statement, I will read a passage from the words of Christ which were among his last utterances.

“Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one, I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.”

So, then, by the most express declaration, whatever there was promised to the apostles of the indwelling of the power of divine life in their work, that Christ also prayed for in behalf of all that believe by reason of the apostles’ preaching and teaching. This certainly is a truth of the most transcendent importance.

Is there, then, really such a thing as the intersphering of human souls and the divine soul? Are we, by this metaphorical language, if it be metaphorical, by these pictorial terms and analogies, taught that there is such a thing as the life of God in the life of man, or that man’s life is intersphered by or caught up into the soul of God?

Now, in the very beginning, let me say that as there is nothing in the whole round of human knowledge that is so obscure as the operation of the mind of man in its higher elements, so this is the very point of our knowledge where we may be most ignorant of divine things, since it is to be laid down as an invariable maxim that we can only know so much of the divine as we have some specimen or likeness of in ourselves. We can only conceive of attributes the germs and elements of which are in us. We can think of no justice in God that is not a glorified form of the justice of which we have had some experience. We can imagine no pity which we have not felt something of. We cannot understand what self-sacrifice means except by having experienced it in ourselves or having witnessed it in others.

In attempting to apprehend the higher forms of divine life we are attempting to apprehend those things of which the types, or prototypes, or germs in us are the feeblest and the least likely to be apprehended. It is certain that there are very many parts of the experience of men which they reckon as transcendent, but which absolutely elude analysis. There is no person of any considerable magnitude of head or brain, or of any considerable sensibility of mind, who does not know that he has been brought under pressures and under excitements that exalted thought, and with that vision, and with that will, and with that the emotions, of which he could give no explanation, and concerning which he could lay down no journal and no chart. There are moods which men are exalted into, but which they know vaguely, and of which they are obliged to speak as Paul did of the things which he saw in the seventh heaven, when he said that they were not lawful [that is, possible] to utter or report. Have you had no feelings for which you never had ideas? Then you are shallow. Have you had no moods, the power of which you remember, and the experience of which was glorious, but which you were absolutely powerless to explain in any wise? Have there not been hours in your friendships, have there not been conjunctions of circumstances, when everything that was best in you was stimulated, so that it burst out towards objects of affection, which language was utterly inad-

equate to describe? Have you not had conceptions of heroism which immensely transcended any ordinary day-by-day conceptions? Are there, in your experience, no glorified hours, no hours of transfiguration in which you stand to rebuke the vulgarity and lowness of your ordinary daily experience? In the higher moods of your mind, are there no enthusiasms, no divine raptures, which you cannot express in words?

Now, consider with what royalty, with what power, with what amplitude, the soul of man moves in those occasional hours, and in those higher moods. Consider how different he is then from what he is in his common uninspired hours and moods.

Well, the comparison of those higher moods with our lower moods forms a kind of remote and dim analogy of the possibilities of the higher life. Not that it reveals the union of God with man, but it leads one to feel that it cannot be quibbled or reasoned away merely because, when you apply the strict rules of investigation, of thought-power and of analysis, you cannot define it.

Let science pursue her own round. We recognize the utility and beauty of it. All I have to say is this: Science shall not undertake to say, "You can," or, "You cannot," in regard to the higher experiences of the soul. It shall not undertake to define the possibilities of the human mind, or the soundness of the experiences which belong to that part of the mind which stands next to spiritual elements—nearest to the invisible. Science may undertake to show that in my description of a physical thing I have erred by omission or by exaggeration; science may undertake to determine that in my analysis of certain substances I have erred either by too much or too little; science may undertake to say that when I claim for myself a certain mode of activity there are positive evidences that it cannot be so or can be so, as the case may be; but when science goes further than that, when it goes beyond the material realm, the basis being granted, and the quality being acknowledged, and undertakes to apply the tests of the lower reason and understanding to the soul-quality, then I stand and protest.

You may tell me that a certain soil is absolutely unfit for vegetation ; that it is nothing but dead, dead, dead sand ; or you may say that another soil is a great deal better ; you may go on and make your analyses of soils in all their various gradations, and tell what their probabilities or certainties are—that is, what their effects will be upon seeds : but when the seed is planted, and the soil has begun to nourish it, I say that there is in the future development, and growth, and life of the plant itself that which no man can foresee, and that you are bound to follow facts, and not foregoing analyses. And so far as the human mind is concerned, I care not whether you call it material or immaterial ; but being a veritable entity, and having power in the exercise of its own nature to develop, I protest against applying to its higher forms those analyses which belong to its foundation and physical connections. It has a life of its own which can only be known by those who have had it, and which cannot be brought down to that kind of description and delineation which belongs to its lower forms.

I can say that my hand smarts, and you know what it means ; or I can say that it tickles, and you know what that means ; but who can take the soul in its most ecstatic mood of imagination and tell what its experiences are ? The seer that beholds transcendent visions and things to come ; the poet whose mind moves to music, and effloresces in the nobility of the higher region—how can he subject his experiences to an analysis that is only conformable to a lower standard ?

What I say is, that these higher moods of men make their own rules ; that they are subject to a law which is developed in them and which is peculiar to themselves. A knave cannot be the law-giver for an honest man. A coward can never lay down rules for a thorough hero. A cold-hearted wretch cannot be a legislator for an enthusiastic lover. Every man has his own criterion of judgment which is founded on his knowledge of truth as it is revealed to him by active and positive experience.

If there is one thing that we know, it is that in proportion as men live in the body,—that is, in proportion as they

live to eat, to drink, to work, to rest, and to sleep,—in that proportion their average sensations are united only by juxtaposition, as it were, and so are not united at all, except as a corporation, a company, or an army, is united.

The moment men rise from their lower physical conditions, and begin to work together for a common interest—for self-protection, it may be, or for the acquisition of money that will accrue to their selfishness in common—the moment they work for an invisible quality, which is common to them all, you are conscious that they are united by a bond which is stronger than exterior cohesion. As the thing sought is higher and higher, the enthusiasm in seeking it becomes not only more absolute, but more apparent. Unite men together with the enthusiasm of a real patriotic zeal, and mingle with that the enthusiasm of domestic love ; let those things which make men better than the brutes unite them in the common object of defense and protection, and how much stronger is the union which is produced under such circumstances than where the enthusiasm and the objects are low and physical ! How, when thus united, do men blend with each other ! How is there a well-defined and not unconscious sense of one man's belonging to another, and being in another ! How does it increase in proportion as you go up ! And where men are banded together for unworldly things, how conscious are they of the supremacy of that union which makes them as one !

It is but a step beyond that to suppose that which probability would lead us to suppose—namely, that when we rise to higher moods, to divine moods, to absolutely spiritual moods, to a higher state and to higher experiences, there will be found to be methods of unity and intersphering of which we have no analogies here, and that there is a real, I will not say physical, but substantial unity possible between soul and soul.

I know not whether I have succeeded in making you understand what I mean, for I do not suppose any one has power to define that unity which Christ prayed for. When you have said that it exists in this, that, or the other form, you have not compassed it. All that I have attempted to do has been to lead your mind to the feeling or presumption that

according to the line of analogies there is in the higher experience a coalescing of souls for which there is no formula, which is not definable, which is not separable by analysis into its elements, and which so far transcends the ordinary experiences of man with man that it must stand alone, solitary.

That there is such an action of mind with mind, in the commerce of the individual human soul with the divine, and of the divine with the individual human soul, I think no man can doubt who reads through the New Testament. I think no person can doubt that John was teaching with authority such a truth as that, where he declared, as from the lips of the Master, "I am the vine, ye are the branches; and as the branches can not abide without the vine, so neither can ye abide without me; if ye are broken off ye wither, and are fit only to be burned." This is a physical image; but consider how intimate the union is. Every branch draws life from the common source of vitality. If we grow into God in such a sense that we derive from him the motive-power of life as the branch derives motive-power from the root and stalk of the parent vine, how intimate is our union with him. Again he says, "If any man believe, I will come in to him." The figure is that a man is a house. "Know ye not that ye are temples of the living God?" says Paul. The idea is that men are dwellings with rooms; and Christ, assuming it, says, "If ye are of the right mood or state, I will come in, and I will live in you as one lives in a friend's house; I will dwell in you; I will abide in you." Thus is expressed still more intimately the sense of a higher unity between the soul of God and the souls of believers. And in language which transcends even that, in the passage which I read in the opening service, it is said, "To those who believed on him gave he power to become the sons of God." And then, by express limitations, he throws off the idea that it is in any physical sense, in any earth-born sense, and asserts that it is in a divine sense: not a thing perfectly revealed or revealable, but a growing fact. He unequivocally teaches that there is an interior unity possible between the soul of man and the soul of God.

With this general statement of fact, I pass to that which

practically may perhaps be even more important—a consideration of the signs and effects of such union. We may not aim at it and seek to attain it so much from a distinct knowledge of its psychological state and condition, but we may bring ourselves into that state in which this unity is promised by the efficient power of the divine Spirit—the great Comforter and Enlightener. Then, too, it is a matter of more importance to us to know that it is actually in us, than to know how it is in us. If we find that we have the evidence of adoption in ourselves; if we find that we have that which breathes to us the consciousness that we are in God and that God is in us; if we resort to the proper tests and investigations as to the grounds and reasons of such a belief, this becomes of great practical importance.

One of the first tokens, then, of the indwelling of the divine nature in us is to be seen in the profound sense of humility which it invariably works—a humility that does not mean self-degradation or a feeling of personal meanness. A man may be profoundly humble, and yet not table charges against himself. The sense of elevation, the sense of personal dignity, is immeasurably enhanced by the touch of the divine Spirit in the souls of men. Yet no man can have this ideal produced in him without feeling conscious of how infinitely poor he is in the lower relations of his ordinary life, partly by the necessity of nature, partly by infirmities, and partly by positive sinfulness; but whether from one or all of these causes, his relative rank in the universe, the value that he puts upon himself, is very small. It is that which he hopes to be, that which dwells in him, that is great and glorious—namely, the Spirit of the Father. His own personality is insignificant. The sense of power, of skill, of beauty, of delicacy, of penetration, of thought—power relative to that which belongs to the truly great and to God—this with him is rather an argument of lowness of mind and of humility.

“Take my yoke upon you and learn of me,” says the Master, “for I am meek and lowly of heart.” In his earth-born condition, in his circumscription and limitation while in the flesh, that was the experience of the Saviour; and

when the divine light comes into men's souls, though they may feel that they are but little lower than the angels, though they may feel that by administration and attainment by and by they may be kings and priests ; though they feel that there is no end to the circuits and outlines of their coming glory ; yet their present condition, even when they may feel that it is the most favorable, is lowly ; and the sense of our own poorness and infinite need is greatly enhanced by the indwelling of that light which reveals all darkness, and that beauty which makes manifest all homeliness, and of that grace which makes inferior all the goodness which is in us. The presence of Christ in our souls is a perpetual argument of our humility and lowliness. When there is no light in rooms one is as beautiful as another ; but the moment you bring light into a room, that moment, if things are in disorder, in vulgar contiguities, the light reveals them. And the indwelling light of God reveals to a man the essential poorness and roughness of his own life.

With this sense of personal inefficiency comes also inspiration and courage, for it is the effect of the divine nature to lift, and to fire with a tendency of growth and life, all that it influences ; and courage and aspiration are infallible tokens of God's presence.

There may be moods of perfect quietude, of tranquillity—there are ; there is a peace which passeth all understanding that comes to men ; but we mistake if we suppose that a certain sort of non-exertion is inherent in the notion of peace or tranquillity. The highest peace is the highest excitement. Excitements are disturbing in proportion as they are partial and impure ; but when the excitements of a man's mind are in subordination one to another, when they perfectly harmonize with each other, the highest excitement is the highest tranquillity. There is no such perfect rest or peace as that which comes to men when all parts of their nature, in proper relations to each other, are lifted to the highest possible tension. The indwelling of God does not produce the quietude of insensibility or of indifference, but it produces that peace which comes from courage and hope and aspiration, calm and intense.

I do not say that all will have this in equal power ; but I do say that when men find that their better feelings live in harmony under the highest tension, and do not distract nor exhaust but feed and fill the soul, it is one of the tests of the indwelling Saviour.

The quality of one's soul-life is another test. Sweetness and richness in all the affections, compassion, gentleness, tenderness, pitifulness—these essential qualities of the life of man afford another token or evidence, and a most striking one, of the presence of the divine nature.

The divine Spirit sometimes comes as the mother may come among her children, with the rod, or with the reproof of her tongue, short and decisive ; but the characteristic coming of the Spirit, like the mother's wonted coming, is a coming with gentleness, with tenderness, with kindness, with lovingness. When the nature of God is infused into the human soul, it brings the divine sweetness, the divine affection, the divine compassion, and that beauty which adorns what we know among men. God's nature infinitely transcends the poor and unfruitful natures which have been committed to us for our culture here. All that we know of soul-sweetness and affection and compassion is earthborn. These qualities to us are as the flavors of the undeveloped fruits of the wilderness.

Suppose he who first found the Siberian crab-apple had boasted of the richness of that apple, and then had compared it with the later products which were developed in the orchard ? But what apple is there, carried to its highest perfection, that differs as much from the germ from which it sprang as the soul of a man just “ pawing to get free ” from earth, scarcely unswaddled, absolutely untrained and unfledged, differs from the everlasting glory and beauty of the heart of God itself ? And the difference will vary in different men, just as the flower varies which grows in different places.

The sun comes down in some hard-scrabble neighborhood, and shines on the rocks, and there is little or no fruit produced. In another place the sun comes, and there is more fruit, because there is more soil for the sun to shine upon. In another place the sun comes, and there all the earth

teems, and things choke each other in rampant growings and unbounded tropical luxuriance.

Now, in the poorest soul something comes from the infusion of the divine Spirit. In other souls a great deal more comes from that infusion. In still others there comes an angelic sweetness which no hymn has ever sung, which no prayer has ever uttered, which no words have ever framed an adequate description of. The best parts of a man's nature are parts which he neither can speak of nor detain long enough to analvse. We are throwing off perpetually so many experiences, they pass so rapidly, that we cannot register them. They defy investigation ; and all we can say of them is, "I know."

In the tenderness of twilight, when there steals from the old cathedral gloom wonderful music, strange, weird, massive, and full of soul-touching properties, does any man stand and say, "It is impossible ; there is no instrument there competent to any such result"? But the air is full of the music, which is its own evidence. If the instrument is played upon, and the music rolls forth, it cannot but be a fact.

Tell me, if you will, that the soul of man is a thing of body, and that body is a thing of limitation ; that when men have imagined certain experiences they are enthusiasts ; that when they have carried these imagined experiences forward to a greater height and a greater power they are fanatics ; and that these things are all illusions and deceptions. Tell me that a man professes to have a magnificent experience in the higher realms, while I know his life to be a burrowing in the lower realm, and I will believe that there is illusion ; but show me a man whose life is conformable to right rules, from the lowest to the highest ; show me a man all of whose aims are upward and divine, and who is kindled to a transcendent joy—a joy that never is distempered, that rolls no waves to the shore, and lies smooth as the lake of Galilee—and he is my magistrate, and must teach me what are the facts. I am not his analyst to pull him down and deny those things which are palpable to him. Enthusiasms and fanaticisms are far nobler than ignoble beliefs that lie darkling at the bottom of human life. I say that the human soul is competent to

sensations and experiences which altogether transcend the average experiences from which we derive our philosophy. I say that there is an atmosphere from which may come the opalescent lights of heaven itself. I say that there are states possible which shall ally us to the experiences of the other life, and which shall give token that God is, in most important respects, dwelling in us. If men say they are not possible, I point to the fact, and say that beauty is beauty even if worms deny that it is beautiful.

When the most elevated traits of soul, when the dignity of men's thoughts, and when those spiritual forces which are so unlike the lower forms of life, are gathered in one direction, and into one grand office, so that the conduct, the life, the character, and the work of the Saviour upon earth are again set forth or are grouped together to constitute a magnificent disposition of self-denial—then we shall have the highest token that can be given us of the reality of the indwelling of Christ in the human soul; for Christ came to teach the world by his example under the ordinary circumstances under which men are tempted, and was tempted in all points, in all his faculties, in all respects, as we are, and yet without sin. He was our Exemplar and our Guide in regard to moral truths.

But to me, if you go no further than this, you have left out the best thing—the sacrificial element. If you tell me that Christ came to make atonement for the sins of men; if you tell me that the atonement satisfied the law, that it satisfied God, that it was something interposed between the man and the original infinite and everlasting mercy and love of God, to unlock these qualities and make them available; if you tell me that in the bosom of the Almighty Father, who made me, and made me weak, and put me into a world where I should be environed by temptations that inevitably would produce sin, there was a sacrifice necessary to let out the divine healing quality, then I simply say, "That is coarse; that is Roman; that is of the flesh, fleshly." But if you tell me that Jesus Christ came to lay down his life for men because he so loved the world that he was moved to make a manifestation of the utmost power and en-

deavor for its salvation, saying, "Greater love hath no man than this: I love you; and I give my life for you now, not only, but forever and forever I shall be giving my life for you; I shall come to you; I shall dwell with you; I shall live with you; I shall feed you; I shall give you of myself; and when I have gone up to the heights of power I shall still be one in God, and one in all that believe, and that will let me enter into their souls, and so be their eternal food and eternal support;" if you tell me that Jesus Christ came to die for men, that he might take away the fleshly covering, and that they might see the divine way in distinction from the poor corrupt methods of earth; if you tell me that God governs in that higher realm of ineffable love which is legislative and creative, and which impletes everything in the heavens and in the universe, and that it was to disclose him that Jesus Christ came, that he suffered, the just for the unjust, as every man must suffer who would lift up another, as every man must suffer who would take ignorance, and carry it up, and wait for its development from its low condition to the higher one; if you tell me that Jesus came not only to teach us that such was the essential nature of God the Father, the eternal Godhead, but to take upon himself penalty for the sake of the salvation of those who would otherwise perish; to be the great Burden-carrier and universal Friend of mankind—if you tell me that all this was the work of atoning grace, then I can join, too, in hallelujahs. If you can rejoice on a lower ground, far be it from me to take away your rejoicings. If you need blood in any any other way than as a symbol, if you need the actual or coarser form of legislative and judicial atonement, I would not take it away from you; but you must not put that over my head as indispensable to my faith; you must not wreath around the precious names of God these lower and coarser exhibitions, and call them "orthodox," and with them rule as with a rod of iron. They are essentially not orthodox; they are dropping, and will continue to drop; and in proportion as the hidden peculiarities of the Gospel in the human soul lift a man up to a higher conception of justice, and truth, and purity, and duty, and fellowship, and tenderness, and love;

in proportion as the average experience of Christian men rises higher and grows purer, the thought of development and attainment will be a thousand times more attractive. The higher disclosure of infinite strength, and purity, and goodness, and of the necessary suffering required in bearing with impurity and imperfection, elevates the thoughts and expands the minds of men.

It is this one point of self-sacrifice as connected with the indwelling of God that is the test. A man may counterfeit many other things, but he can scarcely counterfeit this. There are two qualities that it is difficult to counterfeit—love in its higher form, and self-sacrifice in its most ineffable form. Men may make themselves martyrs by special acts; but I refer to the even, uniform moving of one's life in subordination to another's welfare. Bearing each other's burdens; seeking not to please ourselves, as Christ sought not to please himself; living day by day so as to be succor and food to others, and not to build up our strength upon them—that seldom is counterfeited. A man may bear stripes and imprisonment in a zealous cause; but a man who is not persecuted, and who develops himself continuously for the welfare of those who are round about him, pouring out his bounty on the large and the small, on the good and the bad alike, and causing his influence as an effluence to shine as a candle upon those who are in darkness—if such is his notion of life and being and power; if he thus lives in a perpetual self-sacrifice which does not run to enthusiasm or fanaticism, and so is not carried to the ascetic stage—under such circumstances he gives evidence of having in him the genuine article.

If a man says, “I was in darkness; I read my Bible; I compared text with text; and by-and-by, after praying and praying and praying, the light broke on me, and I saw that I was redeemed, and that I was united to God, and that Christ dwelt in me; and now ten years have gone, and I have never known anything but the blessed light of that experience; I am perfect; I am as happy as I can be; O, how little do folks know the privileges to be had! Would that every one could be caught up into that glorious mood!”

—may oe he has it. You cannot tell by the plumage of a bird how it will leap. You cannot always tell by the way a man talks what he is. I would not say that he has it not; but it does not consist in the production of a powerful impression on the imagination. It does not consist in intensity of feeling. It does not consist in the fact that a man has an inspiration which leads him in this exalted way to bear witness. I want to know something more of the quality of his disposition. If I find that where other men are proud he is sweetly humble; that where other men are sharp and acerb he is easy to be entreated; that where others are stingy he is liberal and full of good works; and that where they are dim-eyed he is endowed with intuition which comes from real faith and love in God; if I find, in looking into the jewel-box of his soul, that one after another of these jewels flashes brighter in him than in others, then I say, "Very likely it is there." He may not make the best proclamation of it; but if I find that there are these signs and tokens of it, I give him credit for possessing it. If, on the other hand, I see a man who goes about trumpeting his own virtues, and seeking praise and admiration for them from everybody he meets; if I find that he is arranging everything for his own benefit, and is living to enjoy himself, and that he is magisterial and imperial, then I come to the conclusion that he is empty; for he that has the indwelling of God, with all gentleness, and meekness, and humility, and tenderness, and pitifulness, and self-subjugation and submission to others,—he needs to bear no testimony.

You may go out, in these autumnal days, and bring in half a dozen sprigs of the golden-rod, and ten or twelve of asters from some sheltered place, and a few chrysanthemums, and put them in a room—all perhaps except the last—and insist that they fill the room with fragrance; but do they? See whether anybody perceives it. They are made into an immense bouquet, and put in a conspicuous place, and one comes in, and another, and another, but nobody speaks of it, or thinks anything about it; and I declare, when you say it is filling the room with fragrance, that it is not.

Now, I pluck one tea-rose, one blossom of tube-rose, and

one sprig of some other odorous flower, and put them in a little wine-glass, and set them in some corner out of the way, and say nothing; and one opens the door, and snuffs, and snuffs, and says, "What have you here? Haven't you something here?" They know there is something there. It is hidden, but there is no mistaking its fragrance.

Nobody has a right to say that he has the indwelling of the divine Spirit who is not, when he moves among men, beautiful. I tell you that you are counterfeit if you are homely in holiness. Whoever makes men that look upon him feel, "Well, I would be a Christian rather than be damned, but I should hate to be such a man"; whoever makes holiness homely, is travestyng it. I tell you, the essential element of moral feeling, that which God produces by indwelling, is fragrant, sweet, beautiful. Even virtue is beautiful to vice in its deliberative moods; rectitude is beautiful to the criminal; the qualities that we lack are those that we most desire, often; and where there is a soul that has the heavenly moods brooding it, and that is filled with all the fullness of the Godhead, the sign is that everybody feels that summer is near him, though nobody may be able to tell why. Whenever anybody says of another, "His coming is joy, and his going is night," I care not whether he belongs to the Catholic Church, or the Episcopal Church, or the Presbyterian Church, or the Congregational Church, he is one of God's people, and carries the evidence of divine indwelling in the fact that he is so sweet, so genial, and so benign toward others. There is a sort of low helpfulness that makes men agreeable and sweet; but I am speaking of higher moral moods and spiritual instincts. Where they are acerb; where they are self-glorifying and self-boastful, and inclined to be imperious, and to legislate as with a rod of iron, they are not genuine—they are counterfeits. Where they are genuine there is softness, there is humility, there is patience, there is truth, there is pity, there is love; and where these qualities are combined in a man they are as a cluster of flowers from the heavenly garden, and their fragrance is everywhere apparent.

Is such a life as this possible? Yes. Is it attainable by

all? Yes; but it is not a lecture-room attainment. You want this spiritual elevation; you would be glad to have it; I think every one of you would hold up hands for it; but oh, what a way you would have to go through to reach it! Some of you are built coarsely. You are by nature full of the flesh; and by sickness, by waste, by disappointments, by overthrows, God could, as it were, hew you so thin that there might light stream through you; but you are opaque now, and that is the problem of your life. You need this indwelling divine Spirit; but it will come as discipline, and will be like the baptism of blood that Christ spoke of. You want it, being proud and vain: are you willing to take it at the end of those mortifications and flailings which God would give you before you were brought out of yourself into the sweetest humiliation to the will of God? You want it, being so idolatrous that you run riot like luxuriant vines that have to be cut back in their growth: and are you willing to be cut back, and have your household desolate, and lose here and there a loved one till the insufficiency of this world is demonstrated in your experience, and, at last, you say, "My darlings are gone; my friends are gone; I am alone: come thou, O God, and dwell with me"? Are you willing to gain it at that price? Many of you are suffering; you are going through calamities; you are wondering at God's providence. He is clearing away the snow, and chiseling off the rocks, and you are looking on and waiting to get back to this, that, and the other worldly thing, while God is thinking of that which is above all price, above all value, measured by any earthly estimation—the sonship that is in you; and he is trying one in one way, another in another way, and another in another way. Oh! understand what God is doing to you.

Is it not this indwelling of the Holy Spirit that we need more than everything else? Is it not this that we need for the cure of wrangling in the household, and quarreling in the neighborhood, and all those evils which torment society? Is it not this, above everything else, that the minister needs—the indwelling of Christ? Is it not this that the individual member of his charge needs—the indwelling of Christ? Is it not this that the church needs—the indwelling of Christ?

O, poor, ever-stumbling church ! if it were not for the individual graces and beauties of its membership it would be a stench in the nostrils of humanity. It is so human that all its organizations are oppressive. With all its machinery, so cumbrous, with all its pomp and display, so vast, it has gone reeling through the ages, and the world has gone groaning and travailing in pain until now. Like every other human institution, it is a clumsy affair ; and if it were not for its saints that could be pointed to here and there, it would be considered an intolerable nuisance. There has not, by the tramp of all the armies on the globe, been so much blood trod out as there has been by the feet of ecclesiastics. There has not, throughout the earth, been so much oppression and persecution, in any other direction, or in all other directions, as in matters of truth and religion. And what the church needs, is not apostolicity, it is not canon, it is not precedent, it is not wise laws and customs, so much—these will all flow of themselves, what the church needs is the indwelling of the Lord Jesus Christ. O for a convention, O for an association, that, when it rose and left, should leave the impression on the minds of the common people, “There is truth ; there is religion !” O for convocations of preaching men, that, when they adjourned and went away, should leave a revival of religion, bright, burning, behind them ! It is the want of the divine influence, it is the want of heaven in us, it is the want of Christ in our dispositions and in our lives, that makes men infidels. I will answer every attack from every source of scientific investigation if you will gather in every village a disciple band that shall manifest from day to day and from generation to generation the Master’s Spirit. If Christ dwells in you, and you dwell in him, as he dwells in God, there is no danger to society, none to the individual, and none to the church.

To-day, Christian friends, we close these services by the sweet and joyful service of Communion. We have the body of Christ represented by the loaf broken, as his body was pierced and broken ; we have also the wine, that represents the shedding of the blood ; and both the breaking of the body and the shedding of the blood represent the sacrifice of

Christ for the welfare of those who need him. Is there no one here who needs the Lord Jesus Christ to-day? These symbols are for you, and mayhap will help you to draw near by faith to Him that is above the symbols. Are there none here that are broken-hearted from losses that are greater than they can bear? If you, with a holy sorrow in your soul, were to say, "Jesus, come and help me," perhaps he would come. I invite you to try it. Are there not those who have stumbled in their worldly affairs, who have no comfort, and who look only to further confusion and confiscation? Why not sit down before the symbolization of your Master to-day, and say, "God, Father of providence, Author of all good, now to thee I come—give me thyself"? Why should you not try it? To any of you who are bestead by worldly perplexities and difficulties, is there not here a remedy and a release in Christ? Suppose you do not enter fully into that life? We grow into it. Suppose they are but the beginnings and first steps that you take to-day? Even so.

But I hear men of great grace and conscience saying, "Is not this a most perilous laxity? Do you mean to say that you will spread the table of the Lord's Supper with profound mystery, and then give invitation to partake of it, in your congregation, to every man, whether he is a member of the church or not, whether he has been examined or not, and whether he has professed faith in Christ or not?" Yes, I will. Till you tear out that scene where Christ preached to the multitude, and they thronged about him, and he went in to take dinner in a ruler's house, and when he was at the table the publicans and harlots sat by his side, and touched him, and took bread with him, and ate salt and meat with him, while the keepers of the machinery of the Jewish church stood outside, and said, "Hem! see! he consorteth with publicans and sinners, and eateth with them"—until you tear that out, I shall feel it to be right and proper to offer the Lord's Supper to all who love Christ and feel drawn to him.

Now, every man of you whom Christ would not have rejected, if you had ^{been} ~~been~~ in his time, and had been with him,

and he had gone into a house, and sat down at the table, and you had sat down by him and said, "Lord Jesus, my babe is dead; help me,"—every one to whom he would, under such circumstances, have turned in compassion, I invite to sit down at his table now; for he is as ready to have compassion now as he was then. If you had gone in and sat down with him, and said, "Lord, I am separated from communication with my light and guide, and I am trembling and ready to fall—what shall I do?" and if he would not have turned you away, he will not turn you away now. He is very accessible. He is very sacred, it is true; but he is very familiar. Your Jesus, if he come to you at all, is coming through your infirmities, through your wants, through your needs.

Now, do not make the Lord's Supper more august than the Lord Jesus himself. Do not raise up the emblem and make it more important than that of which it is emblematic. Are you afraid to go to God in prayer, by your thoughts, and ask for mercy and compassion? If you can go to him, how much more can you go to some picture or suggestion of him!

I ward off from this table every such person as comes by rote, and comes for nothing. If my children kissed me perfunctorily, they would not kiss me at all: I would not let them! If a man says, "It is Communion morning," and goes to the Lord's table, and takes the bread and wine because, being a member of the church, he thinks he must, I ward him off. But if there are any here who are weak, and know it, and want strength; who are sinful, and know it, and want grace; who are in darkness, and know it, and want light; who are conscious of the humanness of their life, and want divine purity, and are willing to make a beginning, and will come in all sincerity, and take these symbols in hope of that which they symbolize, you, brother, and you, sister, I invite; for the kingdom of God is yours. And I give this general invitation to all suppliants; to all who are poor and sinful and needy. All who desire to make this Lord's Supper really a means of grace to their souls are invited to partake of it.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

VOUCHSAFE, our heavenly Father, thy blessing to rest upon thy dear servants. Fill them with all hope, and joy, and grace. Since thou hast been pleased to bring them into our midst, grant that we may have toward them such holy affection and such brotherly welcome that they themselves shall no longer be strangers, but of the household. Grant, we pray thee, that we may ourselves be enriched in their coming amongst us. We pray that thou wilt bring into the midst and fellowship of this church more and more who have been wandering, who have been outcast, and who have known God by the outward ear, but not by the conscience and the heart.

We pray that thou wilt strengthen thy servants in this church so to love and so to make known the Word of the Gospel that men shall understand the teachings of God, and the privileges of the household of faith, and that they may be known by the exhibition of Christian living.

We pray that thou wilt grant that the weak may be strengthened; that those who are ready to perish under the cunning wiles of the adversary may be succored and drawn away from peril; that those who are whelmed in darkness and filled with doubts may be established in the simple faith and child-like love of the Gospel of Christ; and that thy love may be mighty in the hearts of this great congregation, and of the community that lies round about us. We pray for a more perfect disclosure of truth. We pray that we may understand more of the nature of God, more of the divine disposition. May we not wander forth to seek the measure of the universe alone. May we not question the stars, and the earth, and the ages, except to know more of the testimony of God who made them. And grant that in thee it may not be the power nor the wisdom that we shall admire, but the glorious holiness which belonged to thine administration of love, and wisdom, and power. Grant that we may enter into that nature which hath in it infinite sacrifice and which was made manifest by Jesus Christ—that nature which, out of itself, feeds creation, nourishes, restores, builds, establishes, saves and glorifies. The height, the depth, the length, the breadth of thy nature we cannot understand; but grant that we may grow toward it with finer apprehension, springing from nobler feelings in us. May our daily life, and all the habits of our thoughts and emotions, so bring us near to thee in kind that we shall understand thy quality; and yet when most understood by us, it is only the fringe or the hem that we behold of thy garment. What art thou? How transcendent, infinitely beyond the reach of all our thought! Thou art to us as to the child's eye the stars are, but a point of brightness; and yet in itself, if we might draw near, how would the orb swell out, transcending all measurement! Thou art to us but luminousness; thou art to us but the sun of glory. What thou art in thy lines and lineaments, what thou art in thy separate qualities and attributes, what thou art in the might of thy power and in the glory of thine empire, who of

* Immediately following the admission of members into the church.

us is large enough to understand? What purity on earth which gives to us our only conception of thy purity is adequate to its measurement? Who that has only felt the influence of love in this world can interpret the love of the divine nature? Since we cannot by searching find thee out, grant that little by little, day by day, we may learn the Spirit of God by becoming like him. Look upon us and love us; and by thy image, and power, and indwelling prepare us better to understand thee until the glorious day shall come when the silver cord shall be loosed and the golden bowl already broken shall be broken entirely, and we shall go home to see thee as thou art, and to be like thee.

We pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon all thy servants who are present to day. How great is the number of those who have come up with their secret needs! Grant us thy blessings, not according to our wisdom in asking, and not according to our judgment of proportions, but according to thine own goodness. Measure thy gifts by thine own abundance and generosity, and bestow them according to thine own kind and wise direction, so that we may feel not only that we are blessed of God, but that he has thought of us in particular, and meted out his graces and providences with reference to our trials, our burdens, our joys and our aspirations.

We pray that thou wilt bless all the households that are here represented. Grant that thy servants may live in such love and fellowship that they shall walk before their children imaging the divine life; and grant that children may be brought up under the influences of their parents more and more just, and true, and honorable, from generation to generation. We pray that thou wilt make our homes to a greater and greater extent altars from which shall go forth to thee light, and heat, and sacred incense.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon all those who are in trouble; upon all those who are snared and know not how to escape; upon all those who are manacled and in prison houses, and are unable to obtain release. Wilt thou who art the Deliverer come forth and fulfill thy mission-work, and open the prison doors, and bring out those that are bound, and set them free.

We pray that thou wilt comfort those upon whom sudden and strange afflictions have fallen, and whose souls are bewildered. Grant that they may stay themselves upon God, and find relief from their fears. If any seem tempest-tossed, and know not where to go for comfort, may they take refuge in God, and find in him that rest which they cannot find in this sin-shaken world.

We pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing to all our schools; to all the teachers in them; to all the officers thereof; and may thy work prevail in their midst. Grant, we pray thee, that the poor and ignorant may be sought out, and that to them in the spirit of true brotherhood and in the condescension of love men may be found to go down and bear their burdens, and bear with their need of restraint, and with their uncomely passions, and seek to exert by their souls, divinely consecrated, an influence by which others shall be brought into the right way.

We pray that thou wilt bless all thy churches in this city. We ask

not that they may be without divisions, and contentions, and collisions, such as thou dost permit, but that all divisions, and contentions and collisions may be for the furtherance of thy cause among thy people. May the truth go forth. Grant that purity may prevail. We beseech of thee that all which is malign, and hating, and hateful, may be suppressed and done away.

Bless thy churches of every name throughout this land. May they rejoice in all the things wherein they may stand together. May they be united in faith, in hope, in love toward God, and in beneficence toward men. If they are divided in anything, may they in their separateness hold fast to thee, and imitate thy spirit, that they may be sanctified in the foundations of their lives.

Grant that the light of truth may go forth throughout this land. Raise up the depressed, give light to the ignorant and carry stability to those that are enfeebled.

May the glory of the Lord shine not only upon this nation, but upon all the nations of the earth. Everywhere may the spring-time of God come. We beseech of thee that all wars and provocations to war may cease. May all ignorance and superstition pass away. May all evils by which man hurts his fellow-man come to an end. May that bright and blessed day come when the new heavens and the new earth in which dwelleth righteousness shall be established.

And to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, shall be eternal praises. *Amen.*

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